



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Volume 15 No. 1

INSIDE TRACKS

SUMMER 2005

Take a Kid Fishing!

Summer is the time to take a kid fishing. Don't forget to enjoy the area while you are there: throw rocks, look under rocks, catch bugs, frogs, and crayfish. Take snacks and a change of clothes. Build memories and a love for fishing. For most waters, you will have better luck using small bobbers, small hooks, and small baits such as a piece of worm. Fly fishing can be effective too. Have fun!

LAKES

HIGH MOUNTAIN LAKES: FWP has a list of high mountain lakes stocked with westslope cutthroat in north-west Montana. Check our Region One website or call us at 752-5501. Many other mountain lakes are self-sustaining and don't require stocking. High mountain lakes are great bets for kids because the fish are usually easy to catch and the scenery is unsurpassed. If you are looking for an adventure this summer, consider a high country day trip or overnight trip to one of these jewels.

Smith Lake Contains yellow perch, some pumpkinseeds, northern pike, and trout. In summer, fish from the dock at the fishing access or along the shore where the weeds aren't too thick. It's usually wet so you'll have to wade. Tie a hook or jig 3 to 4 feet below a bobber and bait the hook with worms, maggots or a perch eyeball for perch or smelt for pike. When a fish bites, reel up the slack until you can feel the fish biting and yank HARD. August and September are good months.

Lion Lake Turn at Hungry Horse and drive about 3 miles toward Hungry Horse Dam. Lion Lake is right next to the road and has a USFS picnic area. Lion contains both rainbow and cutthroat trout. In summer, stillfish with worms and marshmallows or with flies and lures.



A LITTLE BIT OF ADVENTURE!

Fishing for cutthroat trout at Black Lake in the Jewel Basin east of Kalispell. High mountain lakes offer great opportunities for kids. Trout in these lakes are often very easy to catch on flies, lures, or small baits such as live grasshoppers or worms. If you are looking for an adventure, head for the high country!

Beaver/Murray Lakes Drive about 5 miles north of Whitefish on Highway 93. Turn right on the Beaver Lake Road. All lakes contain rainbow and cutthroat trout. Stillfish on the bottom with worms and marshmallows or cast lures.

Echo Lake Fish off the causeway or at the State Lands access in May-June and September-October for perch, bass, some trout, and small pumpkinseeds. Use a small hook or jig with maggots, worms, or a piece of fish under a bobber. To get to the State Lands access, go west across the causeway (towards Kalispell), take the 2nd left, drive 100 yards and turn right down a steep hill. Road is very rough.

Foys Lake Drive 3 miles south of Kalispell on Foys Lake Road. Fish below the guardrail where you first get to the lake or near the County boat ramp. Can be good fishing for rainbows. Fish worms and marshmallows or PowerBait on the bottom or under a bobber.

continued on page three

Most Requested Info at FW&P:

1. Fish stocking lists: high mountain lakes and valley floor lakes
2. Flathead Lake Fishing Guide Brochure
3. Living With Wildlife Brochures (various species) can be found at <http://fwp.state.mt.us/wildthings/livingwildlife/default.html>
4. Fishes of Montana Posters
5. Regulations: fishing, boating, hunting, ATV
Fishing regulations can be found at <http://fwp.state.mt.us/fishing/regulations/default.html>
6. Disability information: applications for license, fishing sites, roads open for hunters
7. State Parks Brochures
8. Region One Interpretive Lobby guide and scavenger hunt brochures. Our Lobby on N. Meridian Road features more than 70 mounted fish & wildlife specimens
9. Fishing Access Guide
10. New: Fishes of the Lewis and Clark Expedition Poster

All of these resources are free and available at the FWP headquarters on North Meridian Road in Kalispell. Please come and visit us! Call 752-5501 for more information.



IN THIS ISSUE

- GREAT LAKES AND STREAMS FOR KIDS TO FISH
- TOP 10 REQUESTED INFORMATION AT FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
- GREAT BROOK TROUT SPOTS
- LEAVING WILDLIFE WILD
- NEW WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA FOR THE PUBLIC TO ENJOY
- FUN IN THE SUN
- LOCAL STATE PARK LISTING



**IF YOU LIKE RECEIVING
THIS, LET US KNOW!**

VISIT...

Visit our local FWP website: On your search engine, type in "fwp.mt.gov" and click on the "1" on the Regional Map of Montana.

LISTEN...

Listen to FWP's radio show, Northwest Outdoors, on KALS 97.1 FM. Northwest Outdoors moment, Tuesday mornings at 7:25, and Northwest Outdoors, Saturdays at 8:15 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Five Great Brook Trout Fishing Spots

Brook trout are very popular with anglers because they are usually easy to catch and they taste great. Also, the catch limits are very liberal in northwest Montana: anglers can keep 20 brook trout daily and in possession. Be sure to review the identifying characteristics for brook trout: remember, brook trout have black spots on their dorsal fin. If there are no black spots release the fish: it's probably a bull trout. Go to FWP's website for trout identification practice! Try these spots for good brook trout fishing:

Miller and Sylvan Lakes, between Libby and Kalispell, about 15 miles south of Highway 2. These lakes are in the East Fisher River Drainage, and can be accessed from the public road. The brook trout are numerous and range up to 10 inches. FWP Fisheries Biologist Mike Hensler of Libby recommends breading and frying the small brookies in light oil. "The tails are the best part," he says. "Better than potato chips."



WHAT A GIANT!

A brook trout from Trumbull Creek.

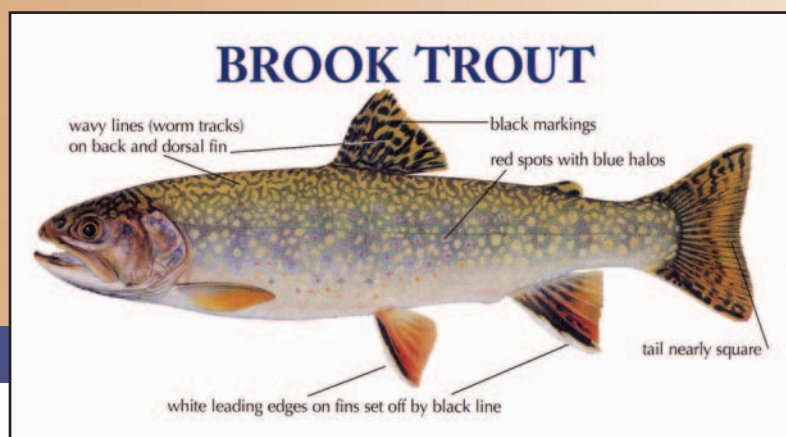
Swan River Tributaries, Swan Valley. A number of tributaries to the Swan River support good populations of brook trout. Try the following creeks: Fatty, Lost, Beaver, Cilly, Glacier, Kraft, Smith, and Whitetail creeks. Be sure to get a Forest Service map and fish on public land.

Good Creek, near Olney: Good Creek is known for good brook trout fishing. There's a lot of nice water and public land, although you may have to do some hiking to find the best spots. Take the Forest Service road from Olney, north of Whitefish and explore!

Upper Thompson River: The upper Thompson River and tributaries harbor brook trout. Kids 14 years old and younger can fish with bait, but anglers 15 and older must use artificial flies and lures. Pick up a Forest Service map and explore the Thompson drainage. Be sure to take along a copy of the fishing regulations.

Trumbull Creek, west of Columbia Falls: Trumbull Creek is loaded with small brook trout. The upper portion of the creek is on F.H. Stoltze Land and Lumber Company land. Be sure to check a land ownership map for the Flathead Valley.

Stoltze allows public fishing access as a neighborly accommodation. Be sure to treat the land with respect.



Take a Kid Fishing! *continued from cover*

Buffalohead Pond Turn on Grandview Drive just south of the Flathead Valley Community College. Just after the road makes a 90 degree turn south, park in the church parking lot near the gully. Walk down the gully under the road and to the ponds. This is a city park pond stocked with cutthroat trout. Best fishing is in May and June. Fish with worms and marshmallows, flies, or small spinners. Take mosquito repellent!

Dry Bridge Slough Turn off Woodland Avenue in Kalispell about 8 blocks south of the Conrad Mansion onto 11th Street East and park in the cul-de-sac (this is the gully where kids sled in winter). This is a city park and the pond is stocked with rainbow trout. Best bait is worms or PowerBait under a bobber (bottom is weedy). Flies and spinners may also work. Best fishing is in late April, May and early June and sometimes September/October.

Shady Lane Pond This pond lies between the Old Steel Bridge and the Roller Rink. Access through the Old Steel Bridge Fishing Access. Pond has pumpkinseeds, bullheads, and cutthroat. Fish worms under a bobber for sunfish and cutthroat. Fish flies and spinners for cutthroat. Fish worms on the bottom for bullheads (watch for sharp spines). There are 2 1/2 miles of hiking trails.

Loon Lake (Ferndale) Turn south off Highway 209 in Ferndale and go 1.3 miles and turn left at the Loon Lake Road. Follow main road just over 1 mile and turn right into parking lot. Rainbows and yellow perch dominate the catch with pumpkinseed sunfish, largemouth and smallmouth bass also available. A dock adjacent to the parking lot is provided by 4-H so please keep the area clean.

STREAMS

Stillwater River Contains westslope cutthroat, lake trout, northern pike, suckers, northern pikeminnow. Use bait (worms, salmon eggs) or small lures and spinners. Mostly private land. Fishing can be good where the river flows through Lawrence Park on the northeast side of Kalispell.

Ashley Creek Go about 10 miles west of Kalispell on Highway 2 and turn on the Rogers Lake Road. Right after you cross Ashley Creek turn right into the gravel pit. You can fish up to Highway 2 and for a half mile above Highway 2 to the falls. Contains brook and rainbow trout. Use worms, salmon eggs or small spinners. Some private land.

Swan River Near Bigfork Dam Contains westslope cutthroat and lake trout. Lots of snags so small spinners and lures work best. Bait will work too. Fish the calmer pockets in the river from the dam to Bigfork for rainbow and lake trout but be careful in the swift water. Have to walk or bicycle to dam, 1-2 miles.

McGregor Creek The creek follows Highway 2 from McGregor Lake to the Thompson River. Easy access on foot most of the way. Mostly Plum Creek or Forest Service lands so no problem with access. Contains lots of small brook trout. Use worms or salmon eggs in the holes. Sneak up on the holes so you don't scare the fish.

Thompson River Drive 45 miles west of Kalispell on Highway 2, then turn down the Thompson River Road. The first 7 miles are private property but most of the stream below that is open to fishing except for some fields. Contains mostly brook trout in the upper end and mostly rainbow trout in the lower end. Lots of nice places to camp and picnic and the road follows the stream so access is easy. Use worms, salmon eggs (bait for kids 14 and younger only), small spinners or flies.

Whitefish River Near Whitefish the river contains some rainbow trout and northern pike. Use spinners or bait for the rainbows. Use large lures or cut bait for the northerns. Fish backwater areas off the main river. Mostly private property so ask permission. Highway 40 Bridge is a popular spot.



Don't Pick Up Young Deer and Elk: Leave Wildlife Wild!

To protect Montana's deer and elk from the threat of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) can no longer safely accept, hold, or rehabilitate deer and elk. This change in policy is necessary because:

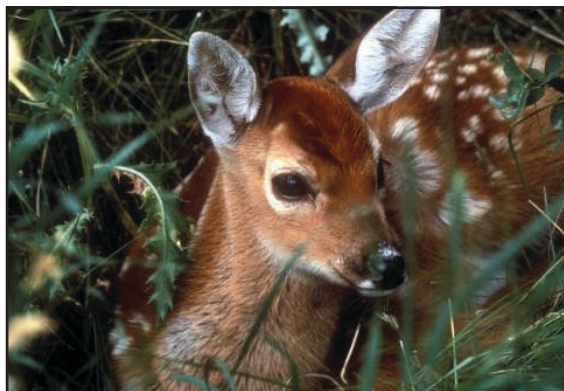
- CWD, a fatal neurological disease that affects deer and elk, is spreading in the United States and Canada.
- CWD has yet to be documented in wild populations in Montana, but it is found in nearby states and provinces.
- Wildlife health experts believe it is only a matter of time before CWD is found in Montana.
- An infected animal housed at FWP's rehabilitation center—or any holding facility—could spread CWD from the center back into the wild.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- **Leave It There!** It's natural for deer and elk to leave their young alone for extended periods of time. What appears to be an orphaned animal may not be.
- **Control Your Dog!** A number of the animals FWP receives are the result of dog attacks. Keep your dog under control, especially in the spring when newborn wildlife is most vulnerable. Pet owners can be cited and dogs that harass or kill wildlife may by law have to be destroyed.
- **Keep In Mind!** It is illegal to possess and care for a live animal taken from the wild.

WHAT IS FWP DOING TO PROTECT MONTANA'S WILDLIFE?

- FWP's surveillance for CWD in Montana is in its 7th year. The agency is developing a CWD action plan to be implemented should CWD be found in Montana.
- Should someone bring a deer or elk to FWP, they'll be asked to take the animal back to the site where it was found. If the animal can't be returned, it will be humanely euthanized.



KEEP WILDLIFE WILD
Please don't pick these up!

New Bull River Wildlife Management Area Now Available to the Public

Hunters, anglers, and outdoor enthusiasts, it's time to visit your new property. The Bull River Wildlife Management Area, located in western Lincoln and Sanders counties, was officially dedicated last month. The area consists of a 1,300 acre parcel held in fee title by FWP, and an adjacent 500 acre conservation easement on land owned by Avista Corporation. The area offers fishing, hunting, and other recreation opportunities in a spectacular setting. Brook trout fishing is reported to be good in the wetlands area; anglers need to check and follow fishing regulations. For the fall, hunters can find applicable hunting regulations for the area's hunting district in the standard regulations booklet.

Identified by state and federal agencies as one of the most important tributaries for fisheries in the Lower Clark Fork River system, the Bull River parcel provides critical habitat for the recovery of the threatened bull trout and sustains winter range and wildlife migration corridors linking the East and West Cabinet Mountains that are especially important for big game, waterfowl, furbearers, and grizzly bears.

"This is a great example of private groups and agencies working together for Montana's wildlife," said Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks director Jeff Hagener. "This project comprises 1,800 key acres of prime wildlife habitat that are now under conservation and recreation management."

A broad-based coalition including The Conservation Fund, Avista, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Plum Creek Timber Company, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acquired the property after years of negotiations and arrangement of funding. Local FWP representatives who were instrumental in securing the WMA include Alan Wood, Gael Bissell, and Jim Williams in the Kalispell office, and Laura Katzman and Bruce Sterling at the Thompson Falls field office.



NEW WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
Wetlands at the new Bull River Wildlife Management Area

Summer is Time for Fun in the Sun at Your Montana State Parks!



NICE DAY FOR A SWIM
Enjoying the water at Flathead Lake Stat Park, Wayfareres

Most of the northwest Montana state parks described in this newsletter offer access to beautiful lakes and streams. See the back page of this newsletter for a complete listing of FWP Region One's state parks. Be sure to think *safety* when enjoying the water this summer. Follow all boating rules and supervise children closely. Take along your fishing rods and a copy of the Montana Fishing Regulations. Be sure to take the time to enjoy your state parks!



Enjoy Your Local State Parks!

State Parks in Northwest Montana's Region One provide vital access for public recreation. The eleven state parks in the region provide a wide variety of opportunities and resources for public enjoyment. Camping fees range from \$12.00 to \$20.00 per night, depending on site demand and accommodations. Entrance fees are \$5.00 per day for nonresidents, but free for Montana residents. One year ago a \$4.00 fee was added to the vehicle registration fee to support State Parks, this fee also eliminated the need to charge entrance fees for residents of Montana, making parks accessible for everyone. Take a gander: which park will best meet your needs?

Flathead Lake State Parks:

Wayfarers/Harry Horn State Park Located near the town of Bigfork, Wayfarers is located on the northeast end of Flathead Lake. Visitors to this site enjoy a large beach area, wildflowers, hiking trails, and the best sunsets in the valley. This 69-acre park with its mixed conifer forest has 30 campsites, including 7 tent-only sites. The park has flush toilets, showers, and trailer and boat sewage dump stations. A large rock outcropping dropping into Flathead Lake provides an excellent location for picnicking and sunset watching. At Harry Horn, a day use area associated with Wayfarers, a group use shelter is available for reservations.

Camping: \$15.00 per night, Day use for non-residents \$5.00 per day.

Yellow Bay State Park Located next to Yellow Bay Biological Station on the east shore of Flathead Lake, this park is located in the heart of Montana's sweet cherry orchards. This 15-acre park includes Yellow Bay Creek and the best beach in the region. There is limited camping, with the primary use at the site being boating, swimming, and picnicking. Flush toilets are available. With the location at the deepest part of Yellow Bay, this site provides a safe year-around deep water launch for Flat-



GREAT CATCH!

Fishing for lake trout at Flathead Lake State Park, Wayfarers.

head Lake users. Camping: \$15.00 per night, Day use for non-residents \$5.00 per day.

Finley Point State Park Designed for the hard-sided camper crowd, Finley Point is a 28 acre secluded park in a mature conifer forest near the south end of Flathead Lake. This park features a 16-slip marina for boats up to 25 feet long, and 16 40-foot RV campsites, set up in a paved parking area. The park is fully accessible, with flush toilets, and a boat sewage pump-out station. Camping: \$20.00 per night, Day use for non-residents \$5.00 per day.

Big Arm State Park This 217-acre park is located on Big Arm Bay just north of Polson on the west shore of Flathead Lake. The park has 37 campsites including 6 tent sites. The park has accessible flush toilets and coin-operated showers, and provides the opportunity to camp directly on the lakeshore. Group picnic and group camping facilities are available by reservation.

Camping: \$15.00 per night, Day use for non-residents \$5.00 per day, Yurt rental \$35.00 per night, two night minimum.

West Shore State Park West Shore, with its 26 campsites is located in 129 acres of glacially carved rock outcrops, giving spectacular views of Flathead Lake, and the Mission and Swan mountain ranges. The shoreline is rocky. Fishing and boating are popular. The park is undergoing renovation, and when it reopens, updated vault toilets, and improved boat ramp and parking will be available. Hiking trails in the park provide scenic vistas in steep terrain. Camping: \$15.00 per night, Day use for non-residents \$5.00 per day.

Wild Horse Island State Park One of the largest islands in the U.S., this primitive park is noted for its endangered palouse prairie plant species and incredible wildlife. Herds of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep and mule deer, along with songbirds, waterfowl, bald eagles, and wild horses make this 2,163-acre island their home. Boat access via Big Arm State Park is popular. No visitor services are available on Wild Horse Island. Camping, dogs, and fires are not allowed. Located on the island are also several private lots, with cabins and homes. Please respect private property. Day use for non-residents \$5.00 per day.

Other State Parks

Logan State Park Located on Middle Thompson Lake midway between Libby and Kalispell on Highway 2, Logan State Park provides camping opportunities for 38. This seventeen-acre state park, located in the middle of Thompson Chain of Lakes Fishing Access Site, provides showers, flush toilets, an RV dump station, playground equipment, and access to excellent warm water fishing for bass, salmon, and trout. Camping: \$15.00 per night, Day use for non-residents \$5.00 per day.

Lake Mary Ronan Lambeth Campground, located in Lake Mary Ronan State Park, provides primitive camping in 26 campsites located in 119 acres. This park provides access to Lake Mary Ronan, one of the most popular fishing lakes in the region. A small group camping area is available via reservation. Camping: \$12.00 per night. Day use for non-residents \$5.00

Whitefish State Park Located on the south edge of Whitefish Lake, this 10-acre park is accessed off highway 93 north of the city of Whitefish. A tidy site with 26 campsites located in a mixed birch, cottonwood, pine forest, this facility provides coin-operated showers, flush toilets, and access to Whitefish Lake. One of only two public accesses to Whitefish Lake, this site is heavily used for boat launching. Swimming access is available, but the shoreline is not ideal. Camping: \$15.00 per night. Day use for non-residents \$5.00

Thompson Falls State Park Located off Blue Slide Road just west of Thompson Falls, this state park is a well-kept secret. Located along the Clark Fork River, just before Noxon Reservoir, this Primitive State Park provides vault toilets, drinking water, and 18 campsites on 36 acres of quiet, densely forested terrain. Camping: \$12.00 per night. Day use for non-residents \$5.00

Lone Pine State Park Lone Pine State Park provides the backdrop for Kalispell. Located off Foy's Lake Road, this 230-acre day use park is designed for hiking, day use, interpretation and group use. An interpretive center with interactive displays is available five days a week, and interpretive programming is provided by on-site staff with prior arrangements. The interpretive center is available for meetings. A picnic shelter will accommodate up to 50 for group reservations. 🐾

INSIDE TRACKS is published by Region One

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